REMARKS

Applicants note, with appreciation, the withdrawal of the previous grounds of rejection based upon the Hansen patent.

Confirming the telephone call from the Examiner, claim 15 has been amended to be dependent from claim 14.

In the Office Action dated August 17, 2006, all pending claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103, on the basis of the newly-cited Ryan et al. patent (US 7,061,636) in view of the Hansen patent. A tertiary reference, the Jeyachandran et al. patent (US 6,567,176) was cited against claims 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

It is respectfully submitted that the Ryan patent does not qualify as prior art against the claims of the present application. In support thereof, a Declaration of the inventors under 37 C.F.R. §1.131 is being submitted herewith. Accompanying that Declaration is an exhibit comprising an Invention Disclosure Form directed to the subject matter of the present application. As set forth in the Declaration, the inventors completed that form and submitted it to the Minolta Intellectual Property Department, where it was received on March 21, 2000.

It is respectfully submitted that the currently pending claims are fully supported by the information provided in the Invention Disclosure Form. To illustrate, a claim chart for representative claim 1 is being submitted with this Amendment, and illustrates at least one example of a description in the Invention Disclosure Form for each element of the representative claim. It is respectfully submitted that the other claims are likewise supported by the description in the Invention Disclosure Form.
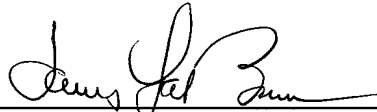
The Declaration of the inventors and the accompanying exhibit provide factual evidence that the inventors were in possession of the claimed subject matter at least as early as March 21, 2000. Since this date is prior to the earliest possible effective filing date that can be accorded to the Ryan patent, that patent does not qualify as prior art against the pending claims.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections based upon the Ryan patent be withdrawn, and that the application be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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Claim 1	Invention Disclosure Document (reference to pages of English translation)
A printing system comprising an on-line client, print server and printer, as well as an off-line finishing device, wherein the print server includes:	Page 6, lines 4-7: " Fig. 1 shows a system configuration. A client 30 is connected to print server 10 via a LAN. A special-purpose video interface is employed to connect print server 10 and print engine 20. Finishing device 40 is integrated as an off-line device."
first memory means for storing specifications of the printer and of the finishing device as well as information regarding options installed thereon	Page 8, lines 1-4: " Job ticket processor 130 contains information on the type of the print engine connected to the print server, any related capabilities, information on the type of finishing device and its related information."
receiving means for receiving from the client data pertaining to a job ticket that includes at least finishing specifics for printing to be executed	Page 6, line 11: " Print server 10 queues the print job sent from the client." Page 9, lines 12-15: "Job Ticket Creating Section 310 This is a user interface to input the finishing function and the method, place and date of delivery requested by the client."
sorting means for, based on the information regarding the specifications and installed options that is stored in the first memory means, separating the finishing specifics included in the job ticket received by the receiving means into those to be performed by the printer and those to be performed by the finishing device	Page 8, lines 4-9: " According to the above information, the process of finishing described on the job ticket is separated into two types; the process to be implemented by the print engine and that to be implemented by the finishing device, whereby a job ticket for the finishing device in the form of a check-list is created."
setting means for setting, in the printer, the parameters for the finishing specifics as separated by the sorting means and assigned to the printer	Page 7, lines 14-15: "Print engine controller 120 regulates the bit map image so that it can be printed, and forwards the data to the printer."
creating means for creating data for a finishing device job ticket that includes the finishing specifics separated by the sorting means and assigned to the finishing device	Page 10, Step 5: " a job ticket in check-list format for the finishing device is created." Page 10, Step 7: " Print engine controller 120 transmits the bit map data and finishing device job ticket to print engine 20."